

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 2579

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, TW
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN ROC

REF: STATE 95778

1. DURING CODEL WOLFF VISIT, STAFF MEMBER SALZBERG MET WITH LEGISLATIVE YUAN OPPOSITIONISTS KANG NING-HSIANG AND HUANG HSIN-CHIEH; WITH DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE GARRISON COMMAND, LT. GEN CHANG SHIH-CH'I AND OTHERS; AND WITH A VARIETY OF PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING THE WIFE OF CHEN MING-CHUNG, THE SISTER OF HSIEH TSUNG-MIN, AND TWO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES WHO CAME DOWN FROM JAPAN. EMBASSY OFFICERS WERE WITH SALZBERG ONLY DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH KANG, HUANG AND CHANG. THE FOLLOWING RECORD HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED WITH MR. SALZBERG.

2. DURING CONVERSATION WITH KANG AND HUANG, SALZBERG INQUIRED INTO CASES OF PAI YA-TSAN, HUANG HUA, KUO YU-HSIN AND THE CLOSING OF THE TAIWAN POLITICAL REVIEW. KANG AND HUANG TENDED TO GIVE FACTUAL ANSWERS WHICH CORRESPONDED CLOSELY TO EMBASSY REPORTING ON THE SUBJECTS. SEVERAL TIMES THEY REFERRED SALZBERG TO THE DEPARTMENT'S RECENT REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ROC, AND EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT HE DID NOT SEEM FULLY FAMILIAR WITH IT. KANG
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SAID THE REPORT WAS FAIR, AND HAD BEEN HELPFUL IN RAISING THE LEVEL OF CONCERN WITHIN THE GROG ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. DURING HIS CALL AT THE GARRISON COMMAND, SALZBERG RAISED THE CASES OF HSIEH TSUNG-MIN, CHEN MING-CHUNG, PAI YA-TSAN, KUO YU-SIN, HUANG HUA AND YEN MING-SHENG.

GEN CHANGE, REFERRING TO WELL-PREPARED DOSSIERS, DENIED ALL CHARGES OF TORTURE AND GAVE THE GROC'S WELL-KNOWN POSITION ON THESE CASES, OCCASIONALLY CORRECTING ERRORS IN SALZBERG'S PRESENTATION. WHEN SALZBERG ASKED TO SEE HSIEH TSUNG-MIN, HE WAS TOLD TIME DID NOT PERMIT THAT, BUT THAT THE GARRISON COMMAND WOULD ANSWER ANY SUBSEQUENT LETTERS SALZBERG MIGHT WANT TO SEND THEM INQUIRING INTO HSIEH'S CONDITION. IN CLOSING, CHANG TOLD SALZBERG THAT THE ROC SUPPORTED PRESIDENT CARTER'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS BECAUSE THE ROC VALUES HUMAN RIGHTS, TOO. HE SAID THE ROC IS A FUNDAMENTALLY ANTI-COMMUNIST STATE WHICH PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF GOOD PEOPLE RATHER THAN THE RIGHTS OF BAD PEOPLE TO HARM GOOD PEOPLE.

4. COMMENT: DURING MEETINGS AT WHICH EMBASSY OFFICER WAS PRESENT, SALZBERG LEFT THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION WITH HIS LOCAL INTERLOCUTORS THAT HE HAD NOT DONE MUCH PREVIOUS STUDY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE ROC. HE PROBABLY MADE A MUCH MORE FAVORABLE IMPRESSION IN HIS MEETINGS WITH PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS, PARTICULARLY WITH RELATIVES OF PRISONERS WHO MUST HAVE BEEN GRATEFUL FOR ANY SIGN OF CONCERN. IN GENERAL, WE BELIEVE THAT THE IMPACT OF SALZBERG'S VISIT ON THE GROC AND OPPOSITIONISTS WAS SLIGHT, BUT THAT IT SERVED AT LEAST AS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE NATURE OF CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE
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